

An Account of some Books.

I. *Befchrijving der OOST-INDISCHE KUSTEN, MALABAR COROMANDEL, CEYLON, &c. Door Philippus Baldæus. T'Amsterdam 1672. in Fol.*

THe Author of this recent History, an active Dutch Minister, having lived many years in the *East-Indies*, especially in *Ceylon*, hath taken great pains to give an account not only of the late Civil Transactions of his Country-men and others in those parts (of most of which he hath been an Ey-witness;) but also of many of the Observables in *Natural* and *Moral* things in the same Countries.

Being mindful of what belongs to our design in these Tracts, we shall but transiently touch, that in this Description are contained the Negotiations, Treatises, and ways of Trade of the Dutch there, both with the *Indians* and *Europeans*; together with many relations of what hath of late passed there, between the *Dutch, English, Portugueses, Moors, &c.* and of the acquests, which the *Hollanders* have there made in Lands, Towns and Strong places; all which, and many others, are here represented in very fair Cuts; such as are the Maps of the *Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel*, and of the Island of *Ceylon*; and the particular Cuts of *Amadavat, Zuratte, Bombaja, Goa, Cranganor, Couchin, Coulang, Tutecorin, Negnapatan, Paliacatta, Masulipatan*, and the representations of the principal Forts of *Ceylon*, as *Batecalo, Gale, Columbo* (the long and difficult siege whereof, together with its being taken by the Dutch from the *Portugueses* is here very largely described,) *Negumbo, Manaar* (a small Isle belonging to *Ceylon*) as also that considerable pen-insule, *Jafnapatnam*, lying within the same *Ceylon*; and may other less considerable places.

But, to come to the *Natural* Observations, our Author taketh notice of the following particulars; scattered up and down in this Volume.

1. That in the Haven of *Suratte*, (being about 22 deg. Northern lat.) a Nord-Nord-East and a South-West Moon makes the highest water; p. 12.

2. That the Elephants, made to fight with one another before the *G. Mogol*, manage the combat with a far greater agility and
courage

courage than one would imagine, and that they presently fall on, and desist according to the word given, embracing one another most lovingly with their trunks, as soon as they are commanded to end the combat ; p. 21.

3. That at *Goa*, lying in 16 deg. Northern Latitude upon an Isle, the Climat is very unwholesome, and subject to great mortality ; though a place scituate for great Trade, which it manages with *Pegu, Siam, Japan, Persia, Cambaja, Arabia, Malabar, Co-remandel, Bengala, Achem, &c.* p. 79.

4. That on the Coast of *Malabar* the nights are very cold, and that there falls a great dew, especially in the months of *January, Febr. and March*, which is followed by intolerable heats in the day ; as also, that the Land-brises begin in the morning about 9 and 10 a clock, and the Sea-brises soon after Sun-setting. The Productions of that Country are chiefly *Pepper*, (which is of three sorts, black, whitish, and long,) *Aloe, Cardemom, Ginger, some Salt-peter and Gumme-lack* ; as also *Bezoar-stones*, which are best at *Cananor* ; likewise *Mirabolans, Tamarines* : That *Pepper* grows best in shadowy places ; hath a weak stem to be supported like Vines ; having on each branch commonly six clusters, each a foot long, in colour like unripe grapes ; that they gather it, being green, in *October* and *November*, exposing it to the Sun to dry, whereby it grows black in a few days ; p. 99. 100, 101.

5. That at *Cananor* there are sometimes found *Bezoar-stones*, of the bigness not only of a Ducks-Egg, (which may be had for six or seven reals,) but also of that of a Hens-egg, for 12 reals a piece ; p. 100.

6. That the way, there used, to discern a true *Bezoar* from a false one, is, either by pressing upon it a red-hot iron-bodkin, whence it will receive no harm, if genuine ; or by weighing it, and then letting it lye in water a whole night : whereupon, if it keep its former weight 'tis a true one ; if not, 'tis counterfeit ; *ibid.*

7. That at *Cochin*, the Capital of one of the Kingdoms of *Malabar*, the Tempestuous winds, there reigning in the winter-months, drive together abundance of clouds against the mountains, where having hung a while, they fall down at last with a sudden impetuosity in dreadful showers, carrying along with them store of earth and sands into the Sea, which are by the same, with certain winds, driven back again, and do obstruct the mouth of the River of that place ; which yet is dis-obstructed again in the Sommer-season ; p. 115.

8. That

8. That most of the Inhabitants of *Porca* in the Country of *Malabar* have swollen Legs ; ascribed to the brackish and Salt-pettry-water, they must drink there ; *p.* 143.

9. That the *Nairos*, (the Gentry of *Malabar*, and the Military men there) are from their youth, even from the seventh year of their age, disciplin'd to great agility of Body, by stretching their tender sinews, and anointing them with certain oyls and unguents, whereby they are disposed to wind and turn their body with extraordinary nimbleness any way, and to wrestle to admiration ; *p.* 144, 145.

10. That about *Tutecoryn*, in *Malabar*, is one of the three chief Pearl-fishings in the East-Indies, comprizing *Manaar* and *Aripou*, situate between *Comorin* and *Ceilon* ; the other two places for taking that rich commodity being *Ormuz* in *Persia*, and *Ainam* on the coast of *China*. Further, that the Pearl-bearing Oysters are hard and tough, and not good to eat : That they must be dived for, 7, 8, 9, 10, fathoms deep ; that all years do not equally yield Pearls, in regard that sometimes the Pearl-banks are cover'd with sand, and sometimes the Oysters are too small ; that the Pearls of *Tutecoryn* and *Manaar* are inferior in goodness to those of *Ormuz*, those being neither so white nor bright as these ; *p.* 151.

11. That at *Tutecoryn*, lying near *Comorin*, there is a quite different season from the places situate close to the North of that *Cape* ; since, whereas from *April* to *September* it is Summer on the South of that *Cape*, 'tis then Winter on the North of the same, there blowing then strong winds on the one side of those mountains, and none on the other. The like of which is found upon several other coasts of the *Indies*, as also in some places of *Africa* ; *p.* 152.

12. That the best stained clothes are made about *Maliapour*, to which a peculiar kind of water, springing there, is thought to be very conducive ; *p.* 159.

13. That between *Penna* and *Caleture*, North of *Palecatta*, on the coast of *Coromandel*, there grows the best *Essaye* ; which is a small root, used in staining Indian Clothes with fixt colours. And that, to discern the best of the kind, it must be broken, and observed, whether it be of a deep red ; besides, it is to be chew'd, and, if found of a Nitrous taste, 'tis esteemed good. And to examine the sincerity of that colour, when the cloth is already stained with it, they rub it hard with the Juice of Limon, and so let it dry
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in the Sun ; whereupon the red colour will appear faded, if false.

14. That at *Petapouli*, near *Masulipatan*, on the same Coast, there grows another excellent *Essaye*, call'd *Tambrevelle*, yielding so high and intense a colour, that it must be mixed with the *Essaye* of *Arrical* or *Ortaour*, to qualify its intenseness. This is only in the power of the Governour of that place.

15. That the great Traffick in Diamonds and Rubies is at *Masulipatan* ; that Diamonds are digg'd in the Countries of *Golconda* and *Decan*, behind *Bengala*, near the Town *Byslaga* ; the Prince whereof keeps a continual guard there, reserving for himself all such Stones as way above 25 *Mangely's* or Carats. The *Old Rock* is in the Country of *Deyam*, yielding the best Diamonds of all. *Borneo* likewise is famous for these Stones, and especially the Town *Bangar Massing*.

Here the Author spends a whole Chapter in discoursing of all sorts of *Gems*, and the variety of each kind ; together with the places of their growth, and the several ways of examining their goodness, and the measure of valuing them. See Chap. 24. p. 162.

16. That the Plant, which yields the *Indigo*, beareth a flower like that of *Thistles*, and a Seed like that of *Fenum Græcum* : That being first Sown, it holds out 3 years ; the first year 'tis cut one foot high from the ground, and the leaves, stript from the stalks, are exposed to dry in the Sun for a day, and then for 4 or 5 days kept in round Tanks or Cisterns, filled with fair water, but brackish, with stones laid on them, and sometimes stirring the water. This water is let out into another Cistern, and there left a whole night ; after which, two men, standing in the Tank, must labour with the arms, as if they were churning of Butter, till the water thickens ; the substance of the *Indigo* being fallen to the bottom : which is then taken out, and being searfed through a fine Cloth, is thinly spread and laid in the Sun to dry ; which maketh the fine *Indigo*. The second year, it grows up and is cut again, being, at least, as good as the *Gyngy* or wild *Indigo* ; And, if you will have the Seed of *Indigo*, the stalks of it must be left to dry this time in the field, and then cut, and the Seed gathered. The third year, it is commonly of little force, and is used by the sole *Natives* for coloration ; no Strangers caring for it : p. 170.

17. That the principal marks of good *Indigo* are, dryness, lightness, and swimming on water, yielding a high Violet-colour, and when put upon live coals, giving a Violet sinoak, and leaving but

few ashes. That the *Indigo-Merchant* is to beware of buying moist *Indigo*, because he will then find, that in eight days time he looses 3 pound in 10; that the same is to try it in a cleer Sun-shine, by breaking some lumps in pieces, and viewing them well, whether he can observe any thing in them that glistens; which if he does, he may be sure, that there is sand in it, with which it hath been sophisticated, to increase and gain by the weight. But for the greater assurance of the goodness of *Indigo*, pass the nail of your thumb over the broken pieces, and it will be of a Violet-colour, if it be good, and the higher that colour, the better the *Indigo*; p. 172.

18. That the best *Indigo* falls about *Ayra*, *Fettapour*, *Bassaune*, *Kindawen*, but especially at *Byana*; all places in the *G.Mogols* Dominions: *Ibid*.

19. That *Thea* is by the people of *China* esteem'd wholesomest when taken fasting, and without Sugar; that the *Dutch* use it much in *India* for health and chearfulness; that 'tis very diuretical, and opening the kidneys, and causing free respiration; that the best grows in the province of *Kiangnan* in *China*, about the Town *Hochicheu*; that, when good, the Leaves yield a very pleasing scent; that 'tis a *Virgultum*, and its leaves very like that, which is called *Rhus Coriaria*, or *Sumach*; that the *Thea* of *China* far excels that of *Japan*; p. 182.

20. The regiment of Life observ'd by discreet *Hollanders* in the *East-Indies*; *ibid*.

21. A Description of the *Ganges* and *Nile*; *ib*.

22. An ample Description of the Island of *Ceylon*; p. 1. of the second part of this Volume. Its riches in several precious Stones, in *Elephants*, and principally in *Cinnamon* and *Cardamom*; *ibid*.

23. That the *Dutch*, upon their Mastering the *Portugueses* in *Ceylon* and *Manaar*, have restored the Pearl-fishing there, which had been a good while interrupted by the Wars between these Nations in those parts; p. 150.

24. That the Coast of *Manaar* is rich in *Fish*; among which there are store of *Caymans*, and a kind of *Sea-Calf*, which is *Amphibious*, and yields Meat, not only far excelling that of *Sturgeon*, but also tasting like *Veal*; and that the Females of them have Milk in their Duggs; p. 152.

25. That, when in the Pen-insule of *Jasnapatnam* (a part of *Ceylon*,) and in the Isle of *Manaar* 'tis Winter and Rainy, 'tis at the same

same time Summer in the rest of *Ceylon*, and on the contrary; *that* in the Plains of *Ceylon* there never blow but two sorts of *Wind*, North and South; but *that* about the higher parts of *Columbo* and *Gale*, &c. the Land-winds reign in the night, and the Sea-winds in the day-time; p. 153.

26. That in *Patiarapalli*, one of the Provinces of *Jafnapatnam*, the *Elephants* by the strength of their Body bear down every year abundance of wild Palm-trees, when their fruit is ripe; p. 170.

27. That in *Paletiva*, one of the small Isles near *Jafnapatnam*, the people catch the wild Horses there by chasing them into a Water-pool, and so mastering them with nooses: p. 172.

28. That the Wild *Elephants* are by the tame Females of the same kind as 'twere duckoy'd into a lodge with trap-doors, where by hunger, and long wakes, and the discipline exercised upon them by tame *Elephants*, they are at length tamed themselves.

29. That *Ceylon* abounds, besides *Elephants* and *Wild Horses*, with *Buffalo's*, *Oxen*, *Cows*, *Sheep*, *Hoggs*, *Goats*, *Deer*, *Elks*, *Wild Bores*, *Tygers*, *Bears*, *Jackals*, *Apes*, *Peacocks*, *Nightingales*, *Larks*, *Snipes*, *Partridges*, *Pigeons*, *Geese*, *Crows*, *Kites*, *Owls*, &c. Of the *Jackals* this Author saith, that they are so greedy after Mans flesh, that the Inhabitants are fain to keep their Dead from them by covering their Sepulchres with large stones. To which he adds, that their Flesh is very medicinal for a Consumption; p. 198, 199.

30. That there are *Serpents* in *Ceylon*, which they call *Sea-Serpents*, 8, 9, or 10 Ells long; (I suppose he speaks of *Dutch* measure:) And others, that catch *Mice* and *Rats*, and do no hurt to Mankind: As also another sort, called *Cobres Capellos*, the most venomous of all, whose bite is said to be commonly cured by the Stone found in the head of the same Creature, laid upon the wound and purged in Milk.

31. That *Ceylon* affords divers sorts of *Precious Stones*, as *Rubies*, *Saphirs*, *Topasses*, *Granats*; and Mines also of *Gold*, *Silver*, and *Iron*, but that the Kings of the Island will not suffer the Royal Mettals to be digged up.

32. That the Commodities for Trade in *Ceylon*, are, *Stained Stuffs*, *silks*, *Porcelain*, *Spices*, *Camphire*, *Ambergris*, *Radix Chinae*, *Amphion*, *Museus*, *Santal*, *Saltpeter*, *Sulphur*, *Lead*, *Copper*, *Tin*, &c.

So much for the Philosophical part of this Work: What concerns the particulars, relating to the proceedings of the *Dutch* in the *East-Indies*, as to their Trade there, and the Acquisitions they

they have there made among the Natives, *Portugueses*, &c ; as also what belongs to the Morals and the odd Religions of those Indian Heathens, I must refer the Reader to the Book it self.

II. Antonii le Grand *INSTITUTIO PHILOSOPHIÆ, secundum Principia Renati Des-Cartes ; nova methodo adornata & explicata.* Londini, apud J. Martyn, in Cœmeterio D. Pauli, 1672, in 8^o.

THIS Author hath with much industry and clearness laid together, in this small pocket-volume, all the parts of the *Cartesian* Philosophy, to facilitate the study of the same to such as desire to instruct themselves in it.

He begins with the Art of using Reason aright, and insists much upon this, that we are to develt our selves of the prejudices of our infancy, and to acknowledge nothing for Truth, but what we do clearly and distinctly understand ; and then, that we ought to give or deny our assent to nothing but what exactly answers to such a clear perception and understanding of ours.

And because all our knowledge is uncertain, as long as we are not sure of a *Being absolutely perfect*, from whom, as the First Truth, all verities do depend ; he asserts the actual Existence of such a Being from the principles of *Des-Cartes*.

Then since from this ground, that there is a God, by whose power all things are produced, and that cannot deceive us, we are certain that we cannot err in the things which we clearly and distinctly know, he infers, that, seeing we have clear and distinct *Idea's* of *Corporeal* things, of which we are not the Causes, and which even occur often to us against our will, that, I say, those *idea's* proceed from things without us, that do truly and actually exist in the world ; for else, *saieth he*, if God should immediatly impress such conceptions upon our Minds, or cause them to proceed from an object, in which there were to be found nothing of *Extension, Motion, Figure, &c.* God could by no means be freed from deception. Whence it follows, according to our Author, that there is a *Substance extended in length, breadth, and depth*, call'd *Body*, the Object of *Physicks*.

Now, in these *Physicks* he excludeth all *substantial Forms* from Body, and ascribeth all the Corporeal Effects of Nature to the various Size, Figure, Scituation, Motion and Rest of Bodies. And admitting, that a Material Substance consists in the said

three Dimensions, and is not really distinguish'd from *Quantity*, he thinks, that 'tis easie to demonstrate, there can be no *Vacuum* in Nature; that Rarefaction is not made but by an acquisition of new matter, &c. Here he treateth of *Gravity*, which he maketh to consist in this, that all the *Subtile Matter*, that is between Us and the Moon, being moit swiftly mov'd towards the Earth, driveth down such Bodies as are less swiftly mov'd. He discourseth also at large of the Nature, Principle, and Laws of *Motion*; of *Time*, and *Place*; of *Hardness* and *Fluidity*; of *Density* and *Rarity*; of *Asperity* and *Smoothness*, &c.

Moreover, he treateth of the Systeme of the Universe, endeavouring to demonstrate the Creation of the World by Natural Reason, and the Identity of the matter of Celestial and Terrestrial Bodies. Thence he proceeds to explicate the nature and motion of the Heavens, Planets, and other Celestial Bodies; as also the nature of Light, and Comets, &c. Which done, he treateth of the Earth, and asserts its Motion with some new arguments, as he thinks. Then he considers the productions within and under the Earth; the nature and effects of the Load stone; the Flux and Reflux of the Sea; the nature of the Air and of the things generated therein; the nature of Fire; of Heat and Cold; of Thunder and Lightning, &c.

After this he undertaketh the Explication of *Man*: And therein, *First* of the *Body* of Man, its parts and composition; where he maintains, that all the parts of the *fœtus* are at first formed altogether in *utero*; and explains, How Nutrition is made; and how the Motion of the Heart, Arteries and Muscles, and the Circulation of the Blood is performed. Then he goes on to the doctrine of *Sensation*, and, among many other particulars, endeavours to shew that the Human Soul receives nothing, but so far as the *Sensitæ* have their Seat in the Brain. Which done, he discourseth of Vision, and Colours, and of the rest of the Senses. *Secondly*, of the *Soul* of Man, whose Immateriality and Immortality he is asserting; whereas the *Soul* of *Brutes*, in his opinion, is merely *Mechanical*, and depends from nothing else but the disposition of the Organs and the Influx of Spirits. To this part he Joins the doctrine of the *Passions* peculiar to Man, and ascribable to him no otherwise than as he is a compound of Soul and Body.

He concludeth with his *Ethicks*, and shews, wherein consists Man's supream Happiness, the nature of Virtue, and Free Will.

III. *An Essay to the Advancement of MUSICK*: by Tho. Salmon, M. A London, 1672. in 8^o.

THE design of this Essay is, to advance *Musick* by casting away the Perplexity of *Different Cliffs*, and Uniting all sorts of Musick, *Lute, Viol, Violin, Organ, Harpse-chord, Voice*, &c. in one Universal Character. And to give the Reader the judgment of an able Master in this Art concerning this Tract, he may please to take that of Mr. John Birchenough, as 'tis extant in the Preface thereof to the Reader, viz.

Here is a well-design'd Epitome of *Practical Musick*: For, by this happy contrivance, the Cliffs, which were many, are reduced into an Universal Character; the various shifting of Notes in a Systeme or Staff of lines are fixed; the necessity of their Transpositions taken away: so that he that can Sing or Play any one Part, may sing or play all Parts; and he that shall know his distances in any one Part, may know them in all parts.

The same Master declaring hereupon, that the benefit of this Essay will be so great to those who shall make use of it, that he knows not what to desire more advantageous for its acceptance, than an Experimental Tryal. Which herewith we recommend to the Ingenious, Lovers of this Art.

Advertisement.

Whereas *Theon Smyrnaus*, about 600 years since, had in a Greek Volume explicated all the Mathematical places in *Plato*, which Volume (as *Blancanus* in the end of his Appendix to *Aristotelis loca Mathematica* saith *Josephus Auria* long ago promised to publish out of the *Vatican*, by himself rendred into Latin; The Publisher of these Tracts, according to his engagement for the Resuscitation of obliging Antiquities, and for the Restoration and Advancement of the Liberal Arts, inquiring, what was performed therein, was assured by his Correspondent from *Paris*, the said *Theon* was there publish'd some years ago by that Learned and Worthy person, *Ismael Bullialdus*, in Greek and Latin together.

And now it is time to consult for the reprinting of *Blancanus* in *Aristotelis loca Mathematica*, corrected, and with careful emendations of his *Mathematicorum Chronologia*; That such as pretend to the great Names of *Aristotle* and *Plato*, may be invited by their authority and example, to learn those Noble Arts. We also hope, that those generous spirits, who may have the help of good Libraries, will recover into publick light the best of Ancient writers, illustrated by modern diligence, as we have not the Elements of *Diophantus Alexandrinus* his *Algebra*, with the Annotations of *M. Fermat* and *M. Bachet*, &c. See N. 72.